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IV.—SALISSATIONES, SIVE AD PLAUTI MILIT. 694.

The purpose of this article is twofold; first, to present a fairly complete conspectus of one of the less-known forms of divination among the Greeks and Romans, and second, to apply this to the interpretation of the Miles Gloriosus, 694. It will incidentally afford also a more complete commentary than any hitherto published on the Pseudolus, 107, and on Theocritus, III, 36.

The form of divination in question is that known to the Greeks as ὁ παλμός, τὸ παλμικὸν οἰώνισμα, ἡ παλμῶν μαντική, τὸ παλμαστικὸν ὄρῃ ἢ παλμοσκοπία, and to the Romans as *salissatio*. By this, auguries were sought from the palpitation of the heart, the throbbing of a vein, the itching of a foot or other bodily member, the twitching of an eye or of any muscle and from the ἥχος ἐν ὠσὶ or *tinnitus aurium*. It is thus akin to, yet distinct from, the divination sought from the πταρμός or *sternutatio*, and αἱ τοῦ σώματος ἐλαῖαι or *naevi*, etc.

The first mention of the term *salissatio* in the extant Latin seems to be that in Marcellus Empiricus who in his work *De Medicamentis Empiricis, Physicis ac Rationabilibus*, XXI, 15, prescribes a remedy *ad cordis pulsum sive salissationem*. This is as clearly a technical term in the physician's craft as is the equivalent παλμός in Hippocrates, Aristotle and others.

The mantic use of the term is, however, clearly implied in the Origines (VIII, 9, 29) of Isidorus Hispalensis: *Salisatores vocati sunt, quia dum eis membrorum quaecumque partes salierint, aliquid sibi exinde prosperum, seu triste significari praedicunt*. We have found it elsewhere only in the Glossaria Labbaei, which cites Philoxenos for the gloss, παλμός, *salissatio*.

It is not improbable, however, that the term even in its mantic signification is much older. Plautus, at any rate, gives a clear instance of such divination in Pseud. 107:

Nisi quia futurumst: ita supercilium salit,

where the wily slave interprets the twitching of his eyebrow as a sign that his hope will be fulfilled. Commentators generally

compare with this the query of the goatherd in Theocritus, III, 36:

Ἀλλεται ὀφθαλμός μεν ὁ δεξιός· ἡ ρά γ' ἰδησῶ
αὐτάν;

Augustine also refers to same class of auguries when speaking in his *De Doctrina Christiana* (II, 20, 30 f.) of the superstitious he mentions among *millia inanissimarum observationum*, "*si membrorum aliquod salierit.*"

On the Greek side there are more witnesses for this mode of divination. Suidas, s. v. Ποσειδώνιος, says that P. wrote a work on τὸ παλμικὸν οἰώνισμα· ὅτι ἐὰν πάλλῃ ὁ δεξιὸς ὀφθαλμός, τότε σημαίνει and repeats this with slight verbal change, s. vv. παλμικὸν οἰώνισμα.

The Pseudo-Justin Martyr, in the Ἑρωτήσεις πρὸς τοὺς ὀρθοδόξους (Ἑρ. 19), condemns such means of divination: Ὁ δὲ παλμός πάθος ἐστὶ σωματικὸν ἐκ τῆς διαδρομῆς τοῦ φυσικοῦ πνεύματος, ἐν τῷ στόματι ὑφισταμένου πάντων τῶν ζώων. Διὸ ἀνάξιον ἔκρινον οἱ ἅγιοι εἶναι κριτήριον τῶν μελλόντων τὸ τοιοῦτον σωματικὸν κίνημα.

Nonnos Abbas in his commentary on Greg. Nazian. Stelit. I. (c. 72) has; παλμαστικὸν δέ ἐστι τὸ διὰ τῆς πάλσεως τοῦ σώματος γνωρίζομενον· οἷον ἐπάλθη ὁ δεξιὸς ὀφθαλμός, τότε σημαίνει· ἡ ὁ ὤμος ἡ ὁ μηρὸς (ἡ κνησμός ἐν τῷ ποδὶ ἢ πρὸς τὸ οὖς ἡχος ἐγένετο),¹ τότε (συμβαίνει)¹ ὁ συνεγράψατο Ποσειδώνιος καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοί.

Ps. Eudocia (Ἰωνιά), No. 734, coincides closely, but does not count (A. J. P. III 489, IV 109, V 114 f., VII 104, XX 351).

Eustathius Macrembolites, or Eumathius, as some MSS give the name, in his erotic novel, τὸ καθ' Ὑσμίνην καὶ Ὑσμινίαν δράμα (IX, 4), writes thus: ἐπὶ δὴ τούτοις πᾶσιν ὀφθαλμός ἤλατό μου ὁ δεξιός, καὶ ἦν μοι τὸ σημεῖον ἀγαθόν, καὶ τὸ προμάντευμα δεξιότατον.

Eustathius of Thessalonica, in commenting upon Iliad VII, 184, says: ὅτι δὲ καὶ ὁ ἐκ δεξιῶν πταρμός οἰωνίζεται τι ἀγαθόν, παλαιὰ νόμησις ἐστὶ καὶ αὐτό. οὕτω δὲ καὶ ὁ παλμός τοῦ δεξιοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ κατὰ τό, ἄλλεται ὀφθαλμός μεν ὁ δεξιός. This seems echoic of Theocritus.

Earlier than any of these and by far the most important authority that has survived is the Egyptian Greek Melampus, author of a work, Περὶ² παλμῶν μαντικῆ, addressed to one of the Ptolemies, supposed to be Philadelphus. There are numerous and considerable lacunae in the work in its extant state, but the

¹ Words in parentheses are omitted in some MSS.

² Edited by Franz in *Scriptores Physiognomiae Veteres*, pp. 450 ff., Altenburg, 1780.

significance of *παλμοί* for 189 parts of the body¹ is given, with a total of 546 omens. Of these, 227 are of general, the rest of specific² application. They cover in a general way the whole range of human experience. Melampus twice cites interpretations made by Antiphon, the famous interpreter of dreams, signs, etc., cites Phemonoe twice and the Egyptians once and has forty-six references to anonymous interpreters of the palmic art. In two instances there are two sets of *ἄλλοι* cited, with interpretations differing from each other and from Melampus. In seventeen instances, Melampus and *ἄλλοι* give interpretations of general application but different. In eleven he gives interpretations of general, they of specific application; in eleven others he gives specific, they general applications. In seven instances both give specific only, with more or less overlapping in five of these. We have here some justification for the *καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοί* of Nonnos.

In four instances the commentator Trillerus has found resemblances to the *Oneirocritica* of Artemidorus, in four others to that of Achmet and in five others to both of these. These resemblances are slight and general in character but are at least remotely suggestive of the idea that certain augural fancies were rather widely associated with certain parts of the body.

Only in connection with the fingers of the right hand does Melampus give any clue at all to the rationale of his interpretations. Here the basis is mythological. In one other instance he indicates a like basis for an interpretation cited from one of his anonyms.

We have, then, ample evidence of an elaborate system of *παλμοσκόπια* as early as the time of Theocritus and the Greek originals of Plautus. The citations from Antiphon show the existence of such superstitions and attempts to divine from them as early as the fifth century. In this system, so far as it is preserved in Melampus, the brow and the eye³ take a prominent

¹ There are 197 omens drawn from the 57 parts of the head, 258 from the 83 parts of the trunk and upper limbs and 91 from the 49 parts of the lower limbs.

² These are distributed as follows: *δοῦλω* 92, *παρθένω* 79, *χήρῃ* 75, *στρατιώτῃ* 11, *τῷ πλουσίῳ* 10, *πένητι* 8, *τοῖς λοιποῖς* 6, *ἐλευθέρῳ* 5, *ἐμπόρῳ* 5, *κυβερνήτῃ* 5, *γυναικί* 3, *γεωργῷ* 2, *ναύτῃ* 2, *τῷ νοσοῦντι* 2, *ἀνδρί*, *τῷ ἀπύρῳ*, *τοῖς ἀτέκνοις*, *τοῖς δανεῖζουσιν*, *τοῖς ἐν δάνει οὔσιν*, *τοῖς ἐνδύμοις*, *τῷ κακῶς πράσσοντι*, *κλέπτῃ*, *κυνηγῷ*, *τῷ μοχθήσαντι*, *τοῖς ξένοις*, *ὁδοιπόρῳ*, *τῷ ὑγιαίνοντι*, *χειροτέχνῃ*, 1 each.

³ As the work of Melampus is so little known and there are so few copies in

part, surpassed in the number of "points" only by the hand and the foot. The quotations from the literature would indicate that in the minds of the people these were pre-eminently associated with this mode of divination.

If now we test the work of Melampus by these passages we shall see how well they harmonize with the system. If it was the right brow of the slave Pseudolus that twitched, it meant *ἀγαθόν*; if the left, *ἀγαθόν* πολὺν ἀπροσδόκητον· ἀλλὰ καὶ εὐτυχῆσει καὶ πίστιν ἔξει. What better omen could the rascal want? Had the goatherd of Theocritus consulted the palmoscope, he might have learned on the authority of Phemonoe, Antiphon, Melampus and the Egyptians that the twitching of his right eye indicated *ἐχθροὺς ὑποχειρίους* ἔξει. ἄγει δὲ καὶ ἀποδήμους, which in his case would mean the defeat of his rivals and the presence of the absent Amaryllis. Surely the love-lorn Hysminias in the romance was amply justified by the sequel in pronouncing the same *παλμὴν* to be *σημεῖον ἀγαθὸν καὶ προμάντευμα δεξιότατον*.

America, the most relevant passages have been excerpted. [The text followed is that of Diels, for which see p. 208.—B. L. G.]

᾽Οφρὺς δεξιὰ ἐὰν ἀλληται, νόσον δηλοῖ ὀλίγον χρόνον, καὶ μετ' ὀλίγον εὐπορίαν· πέννητι, πλοῦτον· δούλω, ἀγαθόν· παρθένω, ψόγον· χήρα, ὕβριν. ᾽Οφρὺς ἀριστερὰ ἐὰν ἀλληται, ἀγαθὸν πολὺν σημαίνει ἀπροσδόκητον· ἀλλὰ καὶ εὐτυχῆσει, καὶ πίστιν ἔξει. ᾽Οφρὺς τὸ μέσον ἐὰν ἀλληται, κατὰ Φημονόην, κακὸν ἅπασιν· δούλω, ἀγαθόν· παρθένω, συμβουλήν· χήρα, ὠφέλειαν.

᾽Οφθαλμὸς δεξιὸς ἐὰν ἀλληται, κατὰ Φημονόην καὶ Αἰγυπτίους καὶ Ἀντιφῶντα, ἐχθροὺς ὑποχειρίους ἔξει. ἄγει δὲ καὶ ἀποδήμους. ᾽Οφθαλμοῦ δεξιῷ τὸ ἄνω βλέφαρον ἐὰν ἀλληται, ἐπικτήσιν πάντως δηλοῖ· κατὰ δὲ Ἀντιφῶντα, πρᾶξιν καὶ ὑγίαν. δούλω, ἐπιβουλήν· χήρα, ἀποδημίαν· ὀφθαλμοῦ δεξιῷ τὸ κάτω βλέφαρον ἐὰν ἀλληται, δάκρυα δηλοῖ· δούλω, ἀγαθόν· παρθένω, ὕβριν· χήρα, ὑποταγήν. ὀφθαλμοῦ δεξιῷ κανθὸς ἐὰν ἀλληται, ἡ ὁ βόλος, πέννητι ἀηδίαν δηλοῖ· δούλω, διαβολήν· παρθένω, κίνδυνον· χήρα, ψόγον· ἐχθροῦ ἀποδημιούτος ἐπέλευσιν δηλοῖ.

᾽Οφθαλμὸς ἀριστερὸς ἐὰν ἀλληται, ἥξει τις αὐτῷ ἀπὸ ξένης, ὃν μάλιστα ἀγαπᾷ· ἡ αὐτὸς ὁδὸν πορεύσεται· καὶ εἰ προσέφυγέ τις ἐξ αὐτοῦ μακρὰν ὁδὸν, εὐρήσει τοῦτον. καὶ ἐπὶ θηλυκῶν προσώπων ἐλπίδα δηλοῖ· πέννητι δὲ ὁδὸν πορευθῆναι ἐπ' ἀγαθῷ, ἐν ἄλλοις δὲ πολλὰ κοπιᾶσαι, καὶ ὀλίγα κτήσασθαι δηλοῖ. ᾽Οφθαλμοῦ ἀριστεροῦ τὸ ἄνω βλέφαρον ἐὰν ἀλληται, πέννητι ἐπικτήσιν δηλοῖ, καὶ εὐπορίαν· δούλω, ἐπιβουλήν· παρθένω, ψόγον· χήρα, ἀγαθόν· πλουσίω, εὐωχίαν· γειωργῷ, καὶ κυνηγῷ, ὠφέλειαν· στρατιώτῃ, προκοπῇ. ᾽Οφθαλμοῦ ἀριστεροῦ ὁ δεξιὸς κανθὸς ἐὰν ἀλληται, ἡγουν ὁ πρὸς τὴν ρίνα, ὑγίαν καὶ σωτηρίαν δηλοῖ. ὁ δὲ ἀριστερὸς ἐὰν ἀλληται, ἐπὶ πάντων ἀγαθὸν δηλοῖ. ᾽Οφθαλμοῦ ἀριστεροῦ τὸ κάτω βλέφαρον ἐὰν ἀλληται, ἀηδίαν σημαίνει· δούλω, διαβολήν· παρθένω, ἀθαρσίαν· χήρα, ὕβριν. ᾽Οφθαλμοῦ ἀριστεροῦ ὁ κανθὸς ἡ ὁ βόλος ἀλλόμενος, ἀηδίας καὶ λύπας δηλοῖ παντί· δούλω, ὠφέλειαν· παρθένω, νόσον. ᾽Οφθαλμοῦ ἀριστεροῦ ἡ οὐρά ἐὰν ἀλληται, ἀγαθὰ πολλὰ δηλοῖ· δούλω, πίστεως ἐπιτυχεῖν, ὅθεν ἂν ὠφελθῇσεται· παρθένω, ψόγον· χήρα, λύπην.

The words *quae supercilio spicit* in Miles 694 have been a puzzle to the commentators. Ussing (1882) frankly confesses: "*Quid sit supercilio spicere ignoro*". He would even like to read *quae supercilia inficit*. Brix (1882) is silent. Lorenz attempted no explanation in his first edition (1869) and in his second (1886) remarks: "Was *supercilio spicere* bedeutet, ist ganz unklar". Tyrrell, though following in his text the traditional reading of the old editions and in his notes the traditional exegesis, had already in the critical commentary to his edition (1881) made the happy suggestion of the reading *quae supercilio spicit* and the interpretation: "Some woman who practised some obscure mode of divination from the eyebrows". He cites Pseud. (l. c.) and Theocritus (l. c.) in support of this. Palmer in Hermathena (IV.¹ 145) heartily endorses Tyrrell's suggestion but would read *supercilium* or *supercilia*. He makes a farther advance in noting the augural use of *spicere*. In the light of the evidence adduced above, it is clear that Tyrrell and Palmer were on the right track but lacked definitiveness. We have no hesitation in reading *quae supercilio spicit* with A B C D and Festus and interpreting as "who divines from the brow", a reference to a female palmoscope. In the vv. 693-4,

*Praecantrici, coniectrici, hariolae atque haruspicae :
Flagitiumst si nil mittetur, quae supercilio spicit,*

there is but a list of five different kinds of female diviners, for whom the hypothetical wife would demand money from Periplecomenus. It will be remembered also that the figures cited above from Melampus indicate that slaves and women were among the chief patrons of the palmic *μάντις*.

In conclusion we would note that in this form of divination we have but a development of a piece of general, or at least widely spread, Indo-European folk-lore. Thus in the ninety-fourth *çloka* of the Megha Duta of the Sanskrit poet Kālidāsa we find palpitations in the left leg and a throbbing in the left eye mentioned as auspicious omens in the case of a female. Passing from the easternmost to the western branches of the Indo-Europeans we find in the Cornish folk-lore that "A twitching in the eyelid is lucky; but you must not say when it comes nor

¹ Not VII. 145, as Tyrrell's second and third editions and the *editio maior* of Goetz and Schoell have it.

when it goes".¹ In Horne's *Daemonologie*, p. 61, we find: "If the right eye itcheth it betokens joyful laughter". Bradshaw in the *Shepherd's Starre* has: "But my right eye watereth, 'tis a sign of somewhat; do I see her yet"? This is probably an echo from Theocritus. Gaule in his *Mag-astromancers Posed and Puzzl'd*, p. 181, includes in a list of "Vain observations and superstitious ominations thereupon", "the tingling of the ear and the itching of the eye". The student of folk-lore may extend *ad libitum* the list of ominous *salissationes* of the eye and other parts of the body. One of the most familiar examples of the latter is Shakespeare's (*Macbeth* IV, 1),

"By the pricking of my thumbs
Something wicked this way comes."

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¹ Cornish Folk-lore, by M. A. Courtney in *Folk-lore Journal*, V, 219.

² EDITORIAL NOTE.—Since the acceptance of Professor OLIPHANT's article, the publication of which has been delayed for some six months, the attention of the Editor of the *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PHILOLOGY* has been called by Professor MILLER of the Johns Hopkins University to a comparatively recent work by Diels: *Beiträge zur Zuckungsliteratur des Okzidents und Orients*. I. Die griechischen Zuckungsbücher (*Melampus περὶ παλμών*). Abhandl. der Königl. Preuss. Akad. d. Wiss. 1907. Phil.-hist. Klasse, IV. 42 pp. II. Weitere griechische und aussergriechische Literatur und Volksüberlieferung. *Ibid.* 1908. Phil.-hist. Klasse, IV. 130 pp. In this work the author has anticipated many of the results of Professor OLIPHANT's study, which was prosecuted under conditions unfavorable to an exhaustive command of the material.—B. L. G.